



KING'S LEAP

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Microwave

Laura Davis, John Henley, Steve Reber, and Mindy Rose Schwartz

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King's Leap is pleased to present *Microwave*, a group exhibition featuring Laura Davis, John Henley, Steve Reber, and Mindy Rose Schwartz. The exhibition inaugurates the basement location at 105 Henry Street and will span both the upstairs and downstairs galleries. Bringing together four artists who have lived and worked together in Chicago since the 1990s, the exhibition draws inspiration from recent histories of decorative art, craft, design, and architecture. Named after the kitchen appliance popularized in American kitchens in the 1960s and 1970s, the works reflect on rituals and structures of Americana.

Laura Davis' work utilizes a variety of materials both fabricated and repurposed which reflect on forms of exchange, whether domesticated, psychological, or transactional. In *Telescoped*, Davis acquired possessions recently put up for sale at the estate of Arnold Crane, a Chicago local art collector. In Davis' work, she modified an addressed package of Crane's upon a vintage telescope stand, wherein the viewer peers into its lens reflecting one's own eye back at them. Elsewhere, Davis exhibits a sculpture of a cat paused in its reverie, a work depicting an open book with a steel bookend, and a hanging mobile which dangles a menacing copper fish. By combining found and constructed materials, Davis' objects seek to merge histories, obfuscate ownership, and disrupt notions of value.

John Henley's graphite and oil paintings on paper depict men performing tasks: washing laundry, feeding pet birds, or reading in the halls of a library. Henley's compositions call to mind both ancient Western art, as well as imaginary propaganda of American valor. Heroicized, the men perform their duties in unison, to the point their function becomes rote: each side mirroring the labor on the other, ad-infinitum. Henley depicts masculine labor at odds with itself: equally banal and intimate.

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Steve Reber's work spans multiple sculptural means to investigate tropes of architecture and mid-century design. In *Sugar Lift*, deconstructed modular design components tower upon Domino sugar boxes. Elsewhere in *Mies Koala*, Reber mounts a large-scale vinyl to the walls of the gallery that echoes Van Der Roë's designs, constructing an impossible architectural fiction. Besides the imposing vinyl is a found plastic Koala tchotchke, resting alongside the wall and vinyl. Sitting in relief, the Koala dangles from the imagined architecture like a tree branch. Interfering in the functional potential of design's promise, Reber reflects on an American vernacular on the precipice of a systems breakdown.

Mindy Rose Schwartz's work unravels the personal qualities intrinsic to mass-produced ephemera and materials. Focusing on home rituals and her personal relationship to astrology, Schwartz consulted with an astrologer regarding an astrological election for her contribution to the exhibition. Upon entering the show, the visitor is greeted by life-sized incense cones, emitting their own potent and handmade scents. Downstairs, glowing ceramic scorpions dance in anticipation of mating. The four works serve as talismans with the purpose to heal and provide home remedy.

Laura Davis (b. 1971) is a Chicago-based artist. Recently she has had solo exhibitions at Hans Gallery (Chicago, IL), Threewalls (Chicago, IL), Chicago Cultural Center (Chicago, IL), Elmhurst Art Museum (Elmhurst, IL), and the Chicago Artists Coalition (Chicago, IL). She has been in group shows at the Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago, IL), and the Hyde Park Art Center (Chicago, IL). Her work has been written about in *Art in America*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Art 21 Blog*, *Art Slant*, and *Newcity*. Davis received her MFA from the University of Chicago in 2004, her BFA from The Cleveland Institute of Art in 1996, and teaches in the department of Contemporary Practices at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

John Henley (b. 1958) is a Chicago-based artist who has taught at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago for the past 20 years. Recent group exhibitions include Hyde Park Art Center, A+D Gallery at Columbia College (Chicago, IL), Research House for Asian Arts (Chicago, IL), Heaven Gallery (Chicago, IL), and Sidecar Gallery (Baltimore, MD), as well as three solo exhibitions at Slow Gallery (Chicago, IL). Henley is working toward a two-person exhibition opening in summer 2022 at Hans Gallery (Chicago, IL). Henley received a BFA from Washington University in St. Louis and an MFA from the Maryland Institute, College of Art.

Steve Reber (b. 1958) is a Chicago-based artist. He currently has a solo exhibition at Devening Projects (Chicago, IL). Previous solo exhibitions include Hyde Park Art Center (Chicago, IL), Decapario Fine Arts Center (Chicago, IL), Three Walls (Chicago, IL), and Chicago Cultural Center (Chicago, IL). Group exhibitions include Illinois State Museum (Champaign, IL), and Road Agent Gallery (Dallas, TX). He was the recipient of an Artadia grant in 2006, received Illinois Arts Council grants in 2006 and 2000, was the recipient of the State Arts Council finalist awards in 2004 and 1999, and received Maryland State Arts Council grants in 1992 and 1998. Reber has been an active faculty member at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago since 1998.

Mindy Rose Schwartz (b. 1956) is an artist living in Chicago and teaches sculpture at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Solo exhibitions include *Interstate Project* (New York, NY), *Et al.*, (San Francisco, CA), *Queer Thoughts*, (New York, NY), *Balice Hertling* (Paris, FR), *Atlanta Contemporary* (Atlanta, GA), *Slow Gallery* (Chicago, IL), and *Terrain Gallery* (Chicago, IL). Select group exhibitions include *The Renaissance Society* (Chicago, IL), *The Spertus Museum* (Chicago, IL), *Rose Art Museum* (Waltham, MA), *Hyde Park Art Center* (Chicago, IL), *Tatjana Pieters Gallery* (Ghent, BE), *Room E-10 27* (Berlin, DE), *Carlos Ishikawa* (London, UK), *Cooper Cole* (Toronto, Canada), *Alter Space* (Los Angeles, CA), *Galerie Hussenot* (Paris, FR), and *Arcadia Missa* (London, UK).